

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1, 4, 5, 7-9, and 11, 14 and 15 were pending in this application. With the amendment, the applicants are amending claims 1, 5, 9, 11, and 14-15 and adding claims 16-28. Therefore, claims 1, 4, 5, 7-9, and 11-28 are now pending in the present application.

Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, and 11-15 stand rejected to under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Murachi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,746,989) in view of Sato et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,535,588). Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Murachi et al. in view of Sato et al. as applied to claim 13, and further in view of Tanaka et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,551,231). It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims, as amended, are patentable over the art of record for the reasons set forth below.

The lower limit of 50wt% formerly included in claim 1 has been removed from claim 1 and is now again recited in newly added dependent claims 19, 20, 22, 26 and 28. However, the applicant's invention, as recited by amended claim 1, includes features which are neither disclosed nor suggested by the art of record. For example, claim 1 and independent claim 11 now recite, "a wall flow filter, means for directing flow of gases to a central portion of the filter."

This means that the claimed apparatus comprises, in part, a wall flow filter and means for directing the flow of gases to a central portion of the filter. By extending the peripheral area of the filter, such as by extending the catalyst in the peripheral area, the flow of gases can be directed to the central portion of the filter. This has the effect of simply and effectively reducing gas flow rates in the peripheral regions, thereby allowing exhaust gases to only flow through the peripheral bypass when the central portion of the filter becomes blocked. This feature is found in the (amended sheets) application at, for example, at page 4, lines 17-24 and Figure 4. No new matter has been added.

This new feature is neither disclosed nor suggested by Murachi et al. or Sato et al. Murachi discloses a method for purifying exhaust gas of a diesel engine. Sato et al. discloses a carbon particulates cleaning device for diesel engines. Neither Murachi et al. nor Sato et al. disclose or suggest a means for directing the flow of gases to a central portion of the filter. Because the references do not teach all of the claim limitations, no *prima facie* case of obviousness can be shown against amended claim 1. Accordingly, for the reasons set forth above, claim 1 is patentable over the art of record.

Claims 4, 5, 7, 8, 12-15, and newly added claims 16-18 include all of the features of independent claim 1, from which they depend, either directly or indirectly. The rejection of claims 4, 5, 7, and 12-14 based on Murachi et al. have been rendered moot in view of the amendments to claim 1. The rejection of claim 15, based on Murachi et al. in view of Sato et al. has been rendered moot in view of the amendments to claim 1. The rejection of claim 8, based on Murachi et al. in view of Sato et al. and further in view of Tanaka et al. has also been rendered moot in view of the amendments to claim 1. Thus claims 4, 5, 7, 8 and 12-15, as well as newly added claims 16-19, are patentable over the art of record for the reasons set forth above.

Amended independent claims 9 and 11 include features similar to claim 1, which are neither disclosed nor suggested by the art of record. For the same reasons that claim 1 is allowable, amended independent claims 9 and 11 are also allowable. Newly added claims 19 and 20 include all of the features of independent claims 9 and 11, respectively, from which they depend, either directly or indirectly. Thus, claims 19 and 20 are patentable over the art of record for the reasons set forth above.

Claims 21-28 have also been added and are believed to be patentable over the cited references. Support for these claims is found in the specification at, for example, page 4, line 11, page 6, lines 11-15, and at Figure 2.

Appln. No.: 09/623,447
Amendment Dated July 28, 2003
Reply to Office Action of February 26, 2003

JMYT-223US

In view of the amendments and arguments set forth above, the above-identified application is respectfully submitted in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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Dated: July 28, 2003

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